

FLIGHT JACKET

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Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

February 22, 2008



Lance Cpl. Melissa Tugwell

Flying through the air, dangling from above, Marines with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163 conducted special patrol insertion/extraction training at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton Feb. 14. Along with SPIE rigging the Marines conducted fast roping and rappelling. For full story see pages 8 & 9.

Inter-service e-mail listings available online

LANCE CPL. AUSTIN GOACHER
Combat Correspondent

As the need for inter-service communication continues to increase due to joint task force assignments, the Department of Defense has taken steps to begin a DoD-wide joint enterprise directory.

The directory, found at <https://dod411.gds.disa.mil>, gives service members the opportunity to locate and communicate with troops within other branches of the military service via e-mail or phone.

The directory, run by the Defense Information Systems Agency, is slated for launch later

GO TO EMAIL, PAGE 4

Home is where the taxes go

CPL. TRAVIS V. EASTER
Combat Correspondent

Marines hoping to change their state of residency must take key steps this tax season before they can file their taxes next year.

The steps ensure Marines file their taxes properly and receive the correct amount of money in return.

"There are certain laws that

Marines must follow dependent on the state they are trying to file residency in," according to GySgt. Patricia White, legal assistance staff non-commissioned officer in charge with the MCAS Miramar Tax Center. "A Marine cannot change his state of residency to another simply for the benefits another state offers."

Marines must obtain and file a Department of Defense Form 2058 state of legal residence certificate first. The document designates the correct state of legal residence for the purposes of withholding state income taxes from military pay.

In order for Marines to

GO TO TAXES, PAGE 4

CFT challenges H&HS Marines

LANCE CPL. MELISSA TUGWELL
Combat Correspondent

Marines with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron here experienced portions of the new combat fitness test at Mill's Park Feb. 14.

"We know we have to take this test soon, however it's still in the proposal phase," said Staff Sgt. Wesley D. Beechum, the training chief of H&HS. "This is the best time to give the Marines a chance to run through it and get a feel for it."

The courses the Marines participated in include an ammunition resupply drill, casualty carry drills and maneuver under fire drills.

The CFT challenges Marines with the basic physical requirements emphasizing endurance and upper body strength, explained Beecham.

The combat fitness test was engineered because of combat experience in Iraq and Afghanistan. It revealed the requirement to develop a combat fitness program and evaluation that will better measure the functional elements of combat fitness, according to the commandant of the Marine Corps' White Letter No. 05-07.

The Marines split up into four different squads. Some Marines

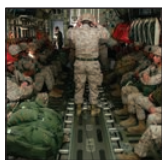
GO TO CFT, PAGE 3



MCAS Web site

Want to know all the buzz? Then check out the Flight Jacket online.

www.miramar.usmc.mil



RAIDERS DROP FROM ABOVE

VMGR-352 conducted aerial deliveries from above the SoCal skies.

For full story, see page 11 & 12.



RUNNING AROUND DIEGO

Service members from around the globe competed in the Armed Forces X-Country Championship in San Diego.

For full story, see page 13.

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Identity Theft is no good for anyone

LT. COL. PAUL J. RYAN
Legal Assistance OIC

Identity theft is the unauthorized use of your name or other identifying information (e.g. social security number, credit card number, etc.) It is most often associated with financial crimes and it is often touted as the fastest growing crime in America. It is not a question of if you will become a victim but most likely when you will become a victim.

Identity thieves obtain a victim's personal information from a number of sources. Here are some of the most common: stolen

mail, unauthorized forwarding of mail, going through trash, the unauthorized recording of credit card or ATM card information during legitimate transactions (skimming), requests for personal information by identity thieves who pose as a legitimate business (phishing), and by the theft or unauthorized release of personal information on file with legitimate business and government agencies.

To avoid becoming a victim of identity theft, here are some steps to take: place an "active duty military" alert on your credit with the three major credit reporting bureaus (Equifax,

Experian, and TransUnion), do not give your personal information to anyone that does not need it, close old financial accounts, cross shed documents that contain personal information, only use bank ATMs, obtain a post office box and send outgoing mail from a post office, forward your mail when you move, never give personal information in response to unsolicited requests, obtain the free annual copy of your credit report, establish passwords for all utility and financial accounts, use a credit monitoring program or credit fraud alert program (for a monthly fee).

If you are ever a victim of

identity theft, follow these important steps: Contact the affected financial institution(s) or creditor(s), obtain a copy of your credit report and place a free ninety-day or seven-year "fraud alert" on your credit with the three major credit reporting bureaus, file and obtain an identity theft police report, file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission, keep copies of all correspondence regarding the identity theft, keep detailed notes of your efforts to resolve the identity theft. Assistance and information can also be obtained at your local legal assistance office and on the internet.

Who to call if you suspect your identity has been stolen:

MCAS Miramar Legal Assistance
858-577-1656

Annual Credit Report Request Service
877-322-8228 / www.annualcreditreport.com

Federal Trade Commission
877-438-4338 / www.ftc.gov/idtheft

Experian
888-397-3742 / www.experian.com

TransUnion
800-680-7289 / www.transunion.com

Equifax
800-525-6285 / www.equifax.com



Editor's Note: *Freecreditreport.com* is not free. To get a free copy of your credit report, visit the Web sites listed to the right.

Religious Services

The Chaplain's Office, located in building 5632 on Bauer Road, coordinates the regularly scheduled services. For the location and meeting schedules of religious activities, contact the Chaplain's Office at 858-577-1333, or visit www.miramar.usmc.mil.

Sunday:

9 a.m. Protestant Worship Service
9:30 a.m. Protestant Children's Worship
11 a.m. Roman Catholic Eucharist

Religious Education/Sunday:

9:30 – 10:45 a.m. Catholic CCD Children K-12

10 a.m. Protestant Adult Bible Study

Wednesday 6 – 7 p.m. Baptist Service

Weekday Worship Service:

Monday – Friday 11:30 a.m. Catholic Mass

Monday 6:30 p.m. Contemporary Praise and Worship Service

Wednesday 7 p.m. Baptist Service

Islamic Worship Service:

Islamic Center of San Diego 858-278-5240

www.icsd.org

Jewish:

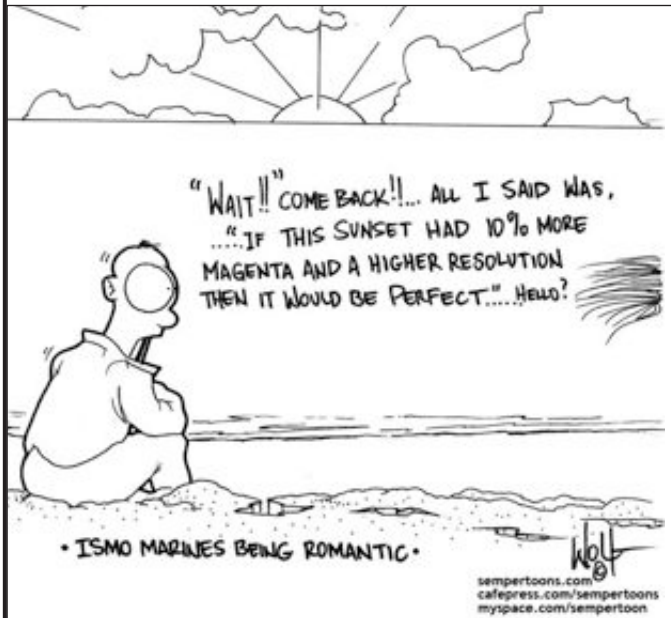
Jewish Outreach at 858-571-3444

www.jewishinsandiego.org

* For Lenten Services, see Page 14

Sempertoons

by Gunnery Sgt. Charles Wolf





Cpl. George J. Papastrat

Marines from Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron participate in the firemen's carry portion of the new combat fitness test. The squadron held the CFT as part of squadron physical training here Feb. 14. The test is expected to be implemented in June, 2008.

CFT,
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

started out with the ammunition re-supply drills sprinting back and forth from carrying two 20-pound ammo cans for 300 yards, while others went from high crawling to sprinting and zigzagging five-yard intervals through cones.

The casualty carry drill involved Marines sprinting to other Marines 50 yards away then conducting a firemen's carry back.

"I was surprised how hard it was because it took a lot out of me," said Cpl. Marco Lucero, a military police officer with H&HS. "I think this test will definitely improve Marines physical performances."

The hardest part involved carrying the ammo cans, stopping, then picking them up and sprinting with them over and over again, according to Lucero.

Marines can expect the test to be implemented in June 2008.



MCAS Miramar MCCS earns 1st place honors from CALFEST

1. MCAS Miramar Air Show - TV Commercial
2. MCAS Miramar Air Show - Promotional Poster
3. MCAS Miramar Air Show - Sponsorship Kit
4. Lewis Black Comedy Show - Promotional Poster
5. Marine Corps Exchange Grand Opening - Marketing Campaign

EMAIL,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

this year and expected to be fully operational in 2010.

The site currently allows DoD employees, with common access cards, to search for the e-mail addresses of service members and civilians throughout the department.

The directory provides users the ability to find people throughout the DoD community, according to the global directory services Web site. It standardizes the format information is provided.

The directory will remain web based and will not be incorporated into the global address list Marines currently have access to via Outlook, explained Maj. Joseph Uchtyl, the head of the Identity Management Branch of Headquarters Marine Corps, Washington, D.C.

"If you want to look up a buddy in the Air Force, you'll have to go to the Web site and type in

the required information," said Uchtyl. "The GAL will continue to be the authoritative source for Marine Corps personnel."

The DISA holds data from across the DoD, but the individual services and agencies are responsible for the accuracy of that data, explained Uchtyl.

"I'm looking forward to the directory becoming fully operational because I know a lot of people in other branches of the military," said Lance Cpl. James Jackson, an ordnanceman with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314, Marine Aircraft Group 11(Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.

Following the completion of the directory, service members will be able to look up phone numbers and ranks of all DoD personnel.

For more information about the directory visit <https://powhatan.iie.disa.mil/gds/index.html> or reference Marine Administrative Message 093/08.

TAXES,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

change their state of residence, they must have a physical presence in the new state with the simultaneous intent of making it their permanent home, according to the DD Form 2058. They also have to show they no longer reside in their home of record.

Captain John Kellner, a legal assistance attorney and the MCAS Miramar Tax Center officer-in-charge, experienced changing his state of legal residence before he joined the Marine Corps. Kellner, born in Virginia, joined the Marine Corps while living in Florida. He moved to Colorado to attend law school and then changed his state of residence to Colorado. Now, Kellner pays state taxes to Colorado because of his legal residency there.

"I think it's the correct and legal thing to do," Kellner commented. "If someone purchased something such as property in one state and did not pay its taxes, that person could owe back taxes. But when done properly, a person could enjoy certain tax benefits because they are a legal resident of the state."

For example, if someone changed their state of residence

while going to college, they could receive the tuition benefits that the state offers to legal residents, explained Kellner.

Following the completion of the DD Form 2058, Marines must bring the paperwork to the MCAS Miramar Installation Personnel Administrative Center.

Marines submit the document and IPAC will update their personal information including W-2 information and service record books.

Corporal Luis Suarez, pay section non-commissioned officer-in-charge with MCAS Miramar IPAC, feels that if Marines get the proper paperwork and start in the beginning of the year, changing a legal state of residence can be quick and easy.

"If a Marine waits too late to file his taxes, it can alter how much he gets back. Moving to another state before filing taxes could result in a Marine receiving two state income taxes deducted from the amount they should receive back. As long as a Marine's paperwork is correct the process is about 10 minutes and painless."

For more information about tax laws for each state visit, www.taxsites.com/State-Links.html.

MWSS-373 changes command

LANCE CPL. CHRISTOPHER O'QUIN
Combat Correspondent

Lieutenant Col. Daniel P. Ermer, the commanding officer of Marine Wing Support Squadron 373, Marine Wing Support Group 37, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, relinquished command to Lt. Col. Todd M. Jenkins during a change of command ceremony here today. Jenkins earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Ohio State University in 1991 and following completion of Officer's Candidate School, he was commissioned a second lieutenant.

Jenkins supported military operations around the world including Operation Restore Hope in Somalia, and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

While deployed, he helped oversee the construction of the Marine Corps portion of Ali Al Salem Air

Base and Camp Rattlesnake.

He attended Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, Calif. where he earned a Master of Science in material logistics management.

Before assuming command, Jenkins was assigned to the Defense Supply Center Columbus, Ohio, where he filled the joint billet of chief for Army Operating Forces Division, Land Customer Operations Directorate.

Jenkins' personal awards include a Bronze Star Medal, Joint Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with a gold star in lieu of second award, a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal,

and a Combat Action Ribbon with a gold star in lieu of second award.

Ermer was commissioned after graduating from Iowa State University and began his career as an engineering platoon commander with 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, 1st Marine Division at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Ermer's personal awards include a Bronze Star Medal with a gold star in lieu of second award, a Meritorious Service Medal with a gold star in lieu of second award, a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with two gold stars in lieu of third award and a combat "V" for valor, a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal and a Combat Action Ribbon.

Ermer is scheduled to report to the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Washington D.C.



Lt. Col. Daniel P. Ermer



Lt. Col. Todd M. Jenkins



Lance Cpl. Christopher O'Quin

Marie A. Proulx was awarded the Saint Catherine Alumnae award at the Officers' Club here Feb. 16. The college, in St. Paul, Minn., recognized Proulx, a Marine veteran, for her devotion to the college through her founding of the San Diego Chapter of the College of St. Catherine Alumnae Association. Present at the award ceremony were Col. Christopher E. O'Connor, the commanding officer of MCAS Miramar, Maj. Heather J. Cortoia, representing Brig. Gen. Angela Salinas, the Commanding General of Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Western Recruiting Region and Sgt. Maj. Barbara J. Titus, the Sergeant Major of Marine Corps Installations West.



This day in Marine Corps History,
February 22, 1945

Men of the 5th Marine Division raised the American Flag on Mount Suribachi.

Baby steps toward new-born TRICARE coverage

LANCE CPL. MELISSA TUGWELL
Combat Correspondent

With the birth of a child, parents can expect frequent doctor visits and an overload of unexpected bills.

To combat the undesired bills, military members may enroll their children into TRICARE Prime or Prime Remote for the proper coverage.

"Getting TRICARE Prime or Prime Remote coverage for your new child is one important thing you should be thinking about, and now it's easier than ever," said Elizabeth Perrine, a TriWest representative.

TRICARE Standard is a fee-for-service option offering a larger range of choices with the option of using any TRICARE-authorized provider. However, there is no assigned primary care giver and a higher out-of-pocket fee will apply.

TRICARE Prime is a managed care option offering the most affordable and comprehensive coverage in areas near military treatment facilities and where regional contractors have established TRICARE Prime networks. One must enroll to participate in Prime; however, no enrollment fees apply to active-duty service members and their families, explained Perrine.

This option offers fewer out-of-pocket fees. Members receive most care from an assigned primary care manager. TRICARE Prime Remote coverage covers those active-duty service members and their family who are assigned to remote duty stations in the United States. These locations include those 50 miles or an hour drive time away from a military treatment facility. For the differences on the two coverages, log on to the Web site.

The first step involves registering the child through the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting

System at the DEERS Identification center located at the Joint Reception Center here. The parent must present an original or certified-copy of a birth certificate, a record of adoption and DEERS enrollment form.

Once enrolled in the system, the TRICARE enrollment process can begin online at www.triwest.com or an application can be printed, signed and mailed to TriWest Healthcare Alliance, P.O. Box 41520, Phoenix, Ariz. 85080-1520.

A child loses TRICARE privileges after 365 days after birth or adoption if not enrolled in DEERS, according to the Web site.

Parents have 60 days from the date of birth or adoption of their child to enroll them in TRICARE Prime to avoid delays or gaps in processing health care authorizations and claims, according to the TriWest Web site.

It's important to enroll newborns within 60 days because if one doesn't, the newborns will be covered under TRICARE Standard, which can bring upon unexpected bills or out-of-pocket fees, explained Perrine.

However a parent can still enroll the child, but the 20th of the month rule will apply, which means if TriWest receives the application for Prime enrollment before the 20th of the month, the benefits will go into effect on the 1st of the next month, according to Perrine. If TriWest receives it after the 20th, benefits go into effect on the 1st of the following month.

"Whether welcoming a newborn or adopting, it pays for parents to understand how to get TRICARE Prime coverage for their child," said Perrine.

For more questions regarding enrolling newborns in TRICARE Prime or Prime Remote coverage, contact 888-874-9378 or log on to www.triwest.com.



AS missions keep Marine presence known

LANCE CPL. JESSICA N. ARANDA
Combat Correspondent 3rd MAW Fwd.

AL ASAD, Iraq-- Aerial reconnaissance dates back to the usage of hot-air balloons and advances to the newest unmanned aerial vehicles, which assist in obtaining imagery across Al Anbar Province of Iraq.

Recently Marine Corps forces in Iraw launched a unique mission. The Aero Scout missions deploy troops to immediately search and assess any sighted suspicious activities across the Multi National Force - West area of operations.

"We're keeping our eyes on vast areas and maintaining an awareness of what's out there," said Capt. William Boulware, a pilot with Marine Heavy

Helicopter Squadron 361. "We're multiplying the capabilities of the ground combat element by stretching their legs to places they normally don't patrol."

These missions also provide a presence of security to locals who are supporting the efforts of the coalition forces, explained Boulware.

Aero Scout missions typically consist of the combined efforts of rotary-wing and fixed-wing aircraft. The F/A-18 Hornets fly above the helicopters, scouting out the areas and obtaining situational awareness.

A UH-1N Huey and an AH-1W Super Cobra provide armed reconnaissance and communicate with the CH-53E Super Stallions, taking the rear of the flight formation.

"We look for anything out of the ordinary," said Maj. Keith Pierce, a UH-1N pilot with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 773, 4th MAW (Forward.) "The beauty of the mission is the aviation and ground elements develop a collective intuition. Once we spot a suspicious area, we relay the information to the ground commander, who forms an opinion on whether to land or not."

The ground commander, his platoon of infantrymen, Iraqi Security Forces and translators travel aboard the Super Stallions, prepared to investigate an area upon landing. When the ground commander makes a decision to land, the troops deplane, set up security and begin their assessments.

At this time, the Huey and Cobra provide close air support to the Marines on the ground or seize the opportunity to refuel.

Other than surveying a location for enemy activity and weapons caches, the Marines also provide humanitarian relief to the locals.

Aero Scout missions have led to the confiscation of approximately 8,000 pounds of homemade explosives, the detainment of insurgents and oil-smugglers and the destruction of improvised explosive device factories and insurgent training camps.

Aero Scouts have proven their effectiveness and continue to become more successful with each subsequent mission, explained Maj. Brett Giordano, the operations officer and pilot with HMH-361.



Lance Cpl. Jessica N. Aranda

Marines attached to Regimental Combat Team 5 hustle to re-board a CH-53E Super Stallion after assessing activities at a fishing camp in Al Anbar Province Feb. 17.

Jumping out: just another day for HR

LANCE CPL. MELISSA TUGWELL
Combat Correspondent

Flying high in the sky, five Marines dangle from a helicopter during insertion and extraction exercises.

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163 supported Marines from the helicopter rope suspension training master course at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton Feb. 14.

A CH-46E Sea Knight flew to Camp Pendleton from here through the rain clouds in the early afternoon to provide a helicopter for the Marines taking the course to special patrol insertion/extraction rig, rappel and fast rope from the center and the rear of the helicopter.

The squadron's mission for the exercise was to provide air support for the HRST master course and to qualify aircrew Marines during the training, explained Maj. Travis Powers, a pilot with HMM-163.

"We are getting our training along with the Marines taking the course," said Powers. "We brought some of our younger pilots and crew chiefs to receive their annual qualifications on their training and readiness syllabus."

The HRST instructors trained the students in insertion and extraction techniques such as SPIE rigging, fast roping and rappelling.

The course spans two weeks beginning with classroom instruction. The students then put their knowledge and skills to use on towers and aircraft.

The Marines learn many different knots and are expected at the end of the course to safely make the knot blind folded, explained Sgt. Robert Pricemon, the lead instructor of the course.

"It's important for them to perfect this skill because the Marines from the rope are trusting their lives in the knots," said Powers.

Upon graduation, Marines are certified to conduct special patrol operations within their units, giving the unit the ability to insert and extract almost any terrain.

"As a HRST master, my job is to ensure the ropers' gear is secure and they are properly connected to the rope," said Powers, a HRST master course student. "Their lives are in our hands."

The exercise began with the CH-46E Sea Knight lifting the Marines into the air during the SPIE rigging training.

Hundreds of feet in the air, students dangled from a rope, preventing them from spinning in the sky.

During each lift, the Marines hung for three to five minutes before it slowly lowered, setting the Marines on the ground. Each Marine ran to the left allowing the helicopter to move forward.

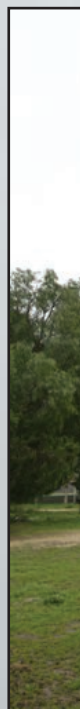
After SPIE rigging, the Marines rigged the helicopter to drop a rope from the middle of the helicopter 30 feet in the air. The Marines then took turns remaining in the helicopter while the rope was secure enabling the Marines to slide through the belly of the helicopter.

The students in the HRST master course experienced the exercise of rappelling while hovering more than 30 feet in the air.

Throughout the seven-hour exercise, 14 students qualified and 14 crew chiefs got their annual qualification training.



Lance Cpl. Melissa Tugwell



ST students

Marines conducting exercise
Pricemon.

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aid Cpl. Andrew Youngblood,
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Lance Cpl. Melissa Tugwell



Lance Cpl. Melissa Tugwell

Students with helicopter rope suspension training master course fast rope down through the bottom of the CH-46E Sea Knight during a training exercise Feb. 14. The helicopter hovered approximately 30 feet in the air for the students to fast rope out.

Safety Note:

Don't forget to check your fire extinguisher and alarms twice a year.



Fire chief 'fights the good fight'

LANCE CPL. AUSTIN GOACHER
Combat Correspondent

After more than 30 years as a member of the federal fire service, the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar fire chief is scheduled to retire May 3.

During his career, Jerry Sack became the last fire chief of MCAS El Toro and the first fire chief of MCAS Miramar.

Sack enlisted in the Navy during 1977 at the age of 17.

He served as a boatswain's mate aboard the USS Concord and the USS Coral Sea. After serving four years in the Navy, he joined the federal fire service.

"I enjoyed the Navy but I knew from my days in kindergarten when we toured the fire department that I wanted to be a firefighter," said Sack. "When I left the Navy, they told me I

could train for any position in the federal government as long as I scored high enough on the entrance test.

"I left the Navy one day and the next week I was in the fire department," said the Austin, Minn. native.

His first assignment as a federal firefighter took him to Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach, Calif.

During his 18 months there, the young firefighter realized the workload wasn't fast paced and challenging enough so he transferred to Long Beach Naval Station and Naval Shipyard Long Beach, Calif. He spent 15 years working his way through the ranks, eventually becoming the fire chief.

Later in his career, he served as the head of fire departments aboard Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany, Ga., and the United States

Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md., before becoming the head of the MCAS El Toro Fire Department in 1997.

When the Marines moved from El Toro to MCAS Miramar, Sack maintained the position of fire chief.

"I knew Tustin and El Toro were closing and moving here and I realized it was a once in a lifetime opportunity to stand-up my own fire department," said the fire chief.

"I thought it would be challenging."

When he arrived here, the fire department was based out of a mobile home, explained Sack.

"We've really come a long way since then," said Sack. "This is probably the best fire department I've ever been with."

During his time in the San Diego area, Sack has directed the fire

department through numerous wildfires and the department has received several awards under his charge.

"He motivates people to do the best they can and improve themselves," said fire Capt. Joshua Allen, a firefighter here. "All good things come to an end. He's been in for a long time and he's definitely earned his retirement."

For Sack, the decision to retire didn't come easy.

"This decision took me six months to make," said Sack. "I've met all of my personal fire service goals and it's time to slow down and enjoy life."

After his retirement, Sack plans to travel with his wife of more than 27 years, Ann, and eventually settle down at their home in Rancho Bernardo, Calif.



Lance Cpl. Austin Goacher

Jerry Sack, the fire chief aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, served as the last fire chief aboard MCAS El Toro and the first fire chief here.

Special delivery from 1500 feet

LANCE CPL. FREDRICK COLEMAN
Combat Correspondent

**MARINE CORPS AIR
GROUND COMBAT CENTER
TWENTYNINE PALMS, Calif.**

--Marine Aerial Refueling Transport Squadron 352, Marine Aircraft Group 11 (reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, participated in delivery exercises at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., Feb. 13, in preparation for their next deployment.

The squadron turned up the engines on one of their KC-130Js,

departed from Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., early in the afternoon and landed in the brisk wind and rolling deserts of Twentynine Palms.

The squadron, known as the "Raiders," briefed with jumpmasters from 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, 3rd Marine Division before they delivered cargo and personnel while cruising at 1,500 feet above sea level at approximately 150 mph.

"During training like this, it's important that all issues are discussed to ensure the aircrew and jumpmasters are on the same page

with each other," said Master Sgt. Monroe Stueber, a jump master with the battalion. "Communication and precision are paramount in missions like this because now we're dealing with humans jumping from the aircraft."

Before the reconnaissance Marines were scheduled to begin their training evolution, Sgt. Tim Cook and Lance Cpl. Chris Weins, the loadmasters during the mission, prepared the two supply crates for delivery into the drop

GO TO DELIVERY, PAGE 12

DELIVERY,

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

zone.

As the aircraft circled around the drop zone, Cook and Weins prepared the static line retrieval cable.

The SLR cable, once tightened, pulls a knife into position, cutting a strap that holds the cargo in place, sending it airborne.

After the cargo rolled out of the back, the pilots continued to circle around the drop zone in preparation for the next part of the exercise, personnel delivery.

However, the reconnaissance Marines didn't perform their training due to unfavorable wind conditions, according to Stueber.

During training, the wind has to be less than 15 mph in order to jump, said Stueber. If the winds are faster than 15 mph, the Marines risk losing control of their para-

chutes.

"I learned a little bit more about what the squadron's duties are in a deployed environment, despite us not being able to release the recon Marines," said Weins on his first aerial deliveries exercise with the squadron. "I continually take in the knowledge the more experienced Marines pass on to me, in hopes to one day be a mentor myself."

With the squadron's primary mission of aerial refueling and rapid refueling on the ground, the aircrew must take these types of exercises seriously, according to Capt. Christopher Kocab, a pilot with VMGR-352.

"As a squadron, we don't perform as many aerial delivery missions as we do aerial refueling while we are deployed," said Kocab. "It's important that we perform in these exercises as if we were in theater."

Exercises like these are often

used as training to help familiarize newer aircrew with other mission capabilities of the squadron,

according to Sgt. Sergio Molina, a crew chief for the Raiders. The more flight hours the newer mem-

bers obtain, the more they learn about the mission of the squadron, added Molina.



Lance Cpl. Fredrick J. Coleman

Lance Cpl. Christopher Weins, a loadmaster with Marine Aerial Refueling Transport Squadron 352, Marine Aircraft Group 11 (reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, and Lance Cpl. Patrick Ward, a Marine with 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, 3rd Marine Division pull a cargo load onto the KC-130J before performing aerial cargo deliveries at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms. The squadron performed the training in preparation for their next deployment.



Lance Cpl. Christopher O'Quinn

Service members from across the Department of Defense begin their 12K run during the Armed Service Cross Country Championship Feb. 16.

X-Country championships hosted in Mission Bay Park

LANCE CPL. AUSTIN GOACHER
Combat Correspondent

SAN DIEGO -- While hundreds of athletes from across the country converged at Mission Bay Park here for the 2008 USA Cross Country Championships, more than 40 service members from the Department of Defense participated in the Armed Service Cross Country Championship Feb. 16.

Runners vied for both individual and team titles, with the Navy earning top honors in both the men's and women's events.

"It was an extremely good competition," said Maj. Joseph Galvin, the deputy staff judge advocate here, and participant in the event. "We'll be back to try again next year."

The top finisher in the women's eight-kilometer race was Marine 2nd Lt. Justine Whipple with a time of 29:21. Following behind were Navy Ensign Aiden Van Cleef and Lt. Abigail Stiles, with times of 30:09 and 30:12 respectively.

"This was a historical event for the Navy. We'd never won the women's event before," said Cmdr. Jim Felty, the Navy team's coach.

The women's Air Force team took the silver medal for the event.

Marine runner 2nd Lt. Sean Barrett finished fourth in the men's race. The top men's finisher, with a time of 37:40, was Navy Lt. Aaron Lancel. The

second and third place runners were Navy Ensign Will Christian, with a time of 38:15, and Army 1st Lt. Phillip Sakala, who crossed the finish line in 38:35.

The team titles for the men's event went to the Navy and the Air Force.

"This was an amazing event and the first time we've ever swept both team titles," said Felty. "It was great to see our guys finish in the top two positions."

The event served as the qualifying race for the United States Armed Forces Team, with several participants earning the honor to represent their country at the Council International du Sports Militaire Cross Country Championship, in Thun, Switzerland this week.

The men's team for the event will include the Air Force's 1st Lts. Brian Dumm, Benjamin Payne and Abraham Wengel, Capt. Levi Severson and Jason Schlarb. From the Army, Sgt. Nate Pennington, 1st Lt. Eric Heely and Sakala. Navy representation at the event will be provided by Lancel, Christian and Seaman Corey Duquett. The lone Marine in the event will be Barrett.

The women's team will consist of Army Capt. Emily Browski, Air Force Capt. Elissa Ballas and 2nd Lt. Caroline White, and the Navy's tandem of Van Cleef and Stiles.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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| <p>Now – March 4</p> <p>Fri, Feb 22</p> <p>Sat, Feb 23</p> <p>Feb 25 – 28</p> <p>Mon, Feb 25</p> <p>Tues, Feb 26</p> <p>Wed, Feb 27</p> <p>Thurs, Feb 28</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation swimsuit program, Tuesdays, 9 - 10 a.m., Semper Fit Center, 858-577-1331 to register • Spouses Deployment Support Group, 10 - 11 a.m. or 12 - 1 p.m., LINKS House, 858-437-7841 • Tap/Jazz Combo Youth Dance Class for ages 3 - 6 years, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m., \$30/month, 858-577-6959 • MOSC Marines, Merlot & Masterpieces Reception & Art Auction, 5:30 p.m., 858-577-4808 • L.I.N.K.S. Session, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., LINKS House, 858-577-4810 • PING demo day & tour van visit, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Golf Course, 858-577-4155 • Marine teen training, 10:30 am, Miramar Sports Complex, 858-577-4128 • TAMP/TAP regular transition class, 7:15 am - 4:30 pm, The HUB, 858-577-6710 • Deployment support group for preschoolers, 3:15 or 4:15 p.m., Teen Center, 858-437-7841 • Alcoholics Anonymous 12-Step Study Group, 6:30 p.m., Counseling Center, 858-577-6585 • QOL Golf: two hours after twilight starts free golf for Miramar active duty, 858-577-4155 • Stroller circuit training, Tues & Thurs, 9:30 - 10:30 a.m., Miramar Sports Complex, 858-577-9143 • New parent support play morning, 9:30 - 11 am, Mills Park, 858-577-9812 • Creative movements dance class ages 2 - 3 years, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m., \$30/month, 858-577-6959 • Jazz/Hip-Hop youth dance class for ages 4 - 7 years, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m., \$30/month, 858-577-6959 • Marine teen training, 6:30 pm, Miramar Sports Complex, 858-577-4128 • Career resource center, career/education Fair, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., The HUB, 858-577-6710 • Intramural softball league coaches meeting, 11:30 a.m., Semper Fit Center, 858-577-1202 • Free financial education forum, 12:30 - 3:30 p.m., Theater, 858-577-9802 to register • Creating financial freedom, 1 - 3 p.m., Counseling Center, 858-577-6585 to register • Deployment support group for preschoolers, 2:30 p.m., Teen Center, 858-437-7841 • Deployment support group for elementary, 4 p.m., Teen Center, 858-437-7841 • Stress Management II, 1 - 3 p.m., Counseling Center, 858-577-6585 to register • Tap/Ballet combo dance class ages 3 - 6 years, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m., \$30/month, 858-577-6959 |
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WE'RE HERE TO SERVE YOU

Duck 'til Dawn Video Game Tournament

Are you a gamer? Enter the Duck 'til Dawn Video Game Tournament, featuring Halo 3 4x4 and Counter Strike. Free for all in The Hub (Bldg 5305). The tournament will take place on Saturday, February 23 from 6 p.m. - 6 a.m. Tournament is open to active duty only and cost is \$5/person or \$15/team. Trophies and prizes will be awarded for the top three places in each tournament. Call 858-577-6171 to register today.

Free Financial Education Forum

Stop by the Bob Hope Theater on Wednesday, February 27 from 12:30 - 3:30 p.m. for a FREE Financial Education Forum. Learn about credit management, smart saving for retirement, mutual funds, Roth IRAs, Thrift Savings Plans and 529 Education Savings. Call 858-577-9802 for more information.

Leap Into Fitness at the Miramar Sports Complex

Join Semper Fit for a special Leap Year aerobics class. The class will take place on Friday, February 29 from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Mills Park. This class will feature plyometrics and other unique exercises. Call 858-577-1331 for more information.

Six Flags Magic Mountain trip for all enlisted service members

Don't miss out on an opportunity to experience Tatsu, The Riddler's Revenge, Goliath, Scream and Viper. The Great Escape is hosting a trip to Six Flags Magic Mountain on Saturday, March 1. This trip is open to all enlisted active duty service members and their guests. Cost for this trip is \$26/active duty and \$31/guest. Call 858-577-6171 to register or for more information.

MCX NEWS

Snacks are available at the MCX Main Store. Get a boost of energy before you shop! Drinks, sandwiches, yogurt, salads, pastries and much more are now being sold at the MCX Main Store by Central Checkout.

Your MCX Main Store will match the price of any identical in-stock item sold in any local store within a 50-mile radius. We will match a difference up to \$5 on the spot, greater price differences require model verification by a supervisor. Some exceptions do apply. See the Customer Service department for details.

Looking for a great gift? Don't forget about the MCX Gift Card: The perfect gift for all occasions. The gift cards are available in any denomination and can be purchased at any register.

Bob Hope Theater

Fri. February 22:

Sweeney Todd (R) 6:30 p.m.

Alien vs. Predator - Requiem (R) 9:00 p.m.

Sat. February 23:

Juno (PG-13) 6:30 p.m.

The Kite Runner (PG-13) 9:00 p.m.

Sun. February 24:

*The Water Horse: Legend of the Deep (PG) 1:00 p.m.

*Walk Hard: The Dewey Cox Story (R) 6:30 p.m.

Wed. February 27:

The Great Debaters (PG-13) 6:30 p.m.

Thurs. February 28:

The Pirates Who Don't Do Anything (G) 2:00 p.m.

*The Kite Runner (PG-13) 6:30 p.m.

*Indicates Last Showing

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Battle Color Det to visit Miramar

The Battle Color Detachment of the Commandant's Drum and Bugle Corps and Marine Silent Drill Platoon team will hold a performance at the Parade Deck here March 5.

Lenten services

Lenten religious services are as followed for Catholics, every Friday of Lent at 6 p.m. For Protestants there will be a Bible study at 7 p.m. with a morning prayer group at 6 a.m. Tuesdays.

Tax Center open

The tax center at the legal assistance office offers free tax filing and assistance. They are open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information contact the legal assistance office at 857-577-1040

Financial education class

There will be a free financial education forum for service members and spouses Feb. 27 at the

Bob Hope Theater at 12:30 p.m. For more information on the course visit

www.saveandinvest.org.

Voting information

Service members and their families can obtain information on voting in the upcoming elections by visiting www.manpower.usmc.mil/voting, or contact a unit voting assistance officer.